

BHA Board Report
11/12/24

A Senator Stopped by BHA



John Tester was in town doing some campaigning last week. We caught up with him and encouraged him to stop by BHA. John not only stopped by to tour the building and hear more about our school, but he took the time to deliver some remarks to our students. He strongly encouraged our crew to vote and participate in government by learning about the issues impacting Indian Country. He also articulated that the rest of the state would be very interested to hear the perspective of some young Blackfeet. Our students asked him some thoughtful questions and got to hear straight from the source what it's like being an elected official.

October is National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month

In recognition of October being mental health screening month, it's a great time to emphasize to our students how important it is to have as many coping skills as possible to help us deal with distress and adversity. Many of our teachers are naturally creative and incorporate opportunities for artistic expression in lessons and assignments. There are many elements of art and music that offer tremendous coping and healing potential. One fun thing Mr. Rink does for bell ringers in his class is to have students draw their response to new prompts each day. For example, today he asked his students to "draw how they're feeling." See the pics below for a sampling of these daily exercises.



Additionally, October is also a great month to lean into other factors that offer our students and families protection from negative health outcomes. We've learned about and embraced research that shows the protective power that specific experiences can afford. In particular, one study by a group of Canadian researchers demonstrated how important it is for early life development to have healthy, benevolent experiences with caring adults. These experiences are things we can easily accomplish at Buffalo Hide, and serves as an extension of our overall model to create a healthy and safe school climate. In fact, it has been shown that the experiences included in the chart below can neutralize (counter balance) some of the negative effects of ACE's.

**Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCE)
Counter ACES - "Growing up I had..."**

Item	YES	NO
1. At least one caregiver with whom you felt safe?		
2. At least one good friend		
3. Beliefs that gave you comfort		
4. Enjoyment at school		
5. At least one teacher that cared		
6. Good neighbours		
7. An adult (not a parent/ caregiver or the person from *1) who could provide you with support or advice		
8. Opportunities to have a good time		
9. Like yourself or feel comfortable with yourself		
10. Predictable home routine, like regular meals and a regular bedtime		
Total YES's = BCE Score		

BHA Receives 2,000\$ Donation to Support Music Program

Brante Tani, a medical student from the University of Washington that's volunteered with us off and on for a few years, received some grant money through an independent project as part of her med school studies. The purpose of her grant was to help develop music programs in underserved communities. She reached out to us and donated funds in the form of Visa gift cards. We received 20 cards in total, each loaded with 100\$ a piece. Our ultimate hope is to invest these funds on viable coping strategies for our students in the form of music gear (guitars, amps, microphones, etc.). The goal is to make as much noise as possible!